



THOMAS L. GARTHWAITE, M.D.
Director and Chief Medical Officer

FRED LEAF
Chief Operating Officer

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES
313 N. Figueroa, Los Angeles, CA 90012
(213) 240-8101

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Gloria Molina
First District

Yvonne Brathwaite Burke
Second District

Zev Yaroslavsky
Third District

Don Knabe
Fourth District

Michael D. Antonovich
Fifth District

December 16, 2004

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Thomas L. Garthwaite, M.D.
Director and Chief Medical Officer

Jonathan E. Fielding, M.D., M.P.H.
Director of Public Health and Health Officer

SUBJECT: **INFLUENZA VACCINE SHORTAGE UPDATE**

On October 19, 2004, the Board approved a motion by Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke, instructing the Director of Health Services to review what impact the increase of patients will have on our already overcrowded emergency rooms and what plans must be implemented to address this increase; and to report on what steps the Department is taking to insure that Los Angeles County has an adequate supply of anti-viral drugs or other treatments. This report is an update regarding the status of the influenza vaccine supply following the November 3, 2004 memo.

Influenza Vaccine Available through Public Health

On November 13 and 20 flu vaccination clinics were held at seventeen sites throughout Los Angeles County. Over 28,000 high risk persons received vaccine at these Saturday clinics.

On Tuesday, November 23, Public Health Centers began administering adult flu vaccinations. Public Health Centers also continue to provide child flu vaccinations. Schedules of the clinic times and locations are available for both adult and child vaccine. A press release was issued on November 22 to advise the public of availability of flu vaccine at these sites. During the first three days of the operation (November 23 through 25) more than 4,000 adult vaccinations were provided at the 13 Public Health Centers.

Influenza Vaccine to Be Distributed to Hospitals

To assist physicians that did not receive vaccine for their high risk patients, in consultation with the Hospital Association of Southern California, we contacted 911 receiving hospitals to offer them flu vaccine for distribution to patients in the high risk groups through their physicians. As of November 24, 12,810 doses had been requested from hospitals throughout Los Angeles County. Transport of vaccine to hospitals began last week.

Additional Influenza Vaccine for Private Providers

Two weeks ago we were notified that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) planned to implement a national plan for distributing additional Aventis Pasteur influenza vaccine. The CDC and the California State Department of Health Services (CSDHS) have provided Public Health with information on ordering procedures and allocation of flu vaccine for Los Angeles County.

The CDHS has allocated a total of 246,370 additional doses of adult influenza vaccine to be made available for purchase by physicians in Los Angeles County. A total of 44,250 additional doses of preservative-free pediatric dose vaccine will also be made available. Providers will send orders to Public Health and those approved will be sent to the CSDHS. The CSDHS, in turn, will forward all vaccine orders to the CDC and to a distributor who will directly ship vaccine to the address requested by each physician. Approximately 60% of the additional adult vaccine will be available for distribution in December of this year and the remainder in January 2005.

On November 24, the Public Health Web page, www.lapublichealth.org included a vaccine ordering webpage for physicians. As of December 7, orders had been placed for over 129,700 doses of vaccine.

Expansion of Priority Groups for Influenza Vaccine

The Department began to offer flu vaccine to an expanded priority group consistent with those groups recommended by the State's Public Health Officer in an amended health order issued on December 14th. Those being added to the eligible groups include:

- ☐ Adults 50 years or older;
- ☐ Out-of-home caregivers and household contacts of persons at high-risk for influenza complications; and
- ☐ Emergency services personnel, including medical, fire and law enforcement.

Additional supplies of vaccine are anticipated in the coming weeks and private providers are now able to order vaccine for their patients. Physicians are now allowed to provide vaccine to anyone in the more broadly defined high risk groups. Public Health Clinics are now offering vaccine to the following priority groups:

- ☐ All children aged 6-23 months;
- ☐ All adults age 50 years or older;

Each Supervisor
December 16, 2004
Page 3

- ❑ Persons aged 2–64 years with underlying chronic medical conditions;
- ❑ All women who will be pregnant during influenza season;
- ❑ Residents of nursing homes and long-term care facilities;
- ❑ Children aged 6 months-18 years on chronic aspirin therapy;
- ❑ Health-care workers involved in direct patient care, including employees of nursing homes and long-term care facilities;
- ❑ Out-of-home caregivers and household contacts of persons at high-risk for influenza complications and
- ❑ Emergency services personnel, including medical, fire and law enforcement.

We will update you on other aspects of these plans as new information becomes available. In the meantime if you have any questions, please let either of us know.

TLG:JEF:al
410:011

Attachment

c: Chief Administrative Officer
County Counsel
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors